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Coordination segment: assessment of the progress made within the United Nations system, through the conference reviews, in the promotion of an integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Vice-President of the Council

Assessment of the progress made within the United Nations system, through the conference reviews, in the promotion of an integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

1. The major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s have contributed towards the development of an integrated framework and a global partnership for development.[1] Their recent five-year reviews and appraisals have been the occasion to reaffirm the goals and objectives agreed at the major United Nations conferences and summits and have identified obstacles and constraints encountered, actions and initiatives to overcome them and important measures for the further implementation of their programmes of action as well as new challenges and emerging issues.

2. Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing conference outcomes. Sustainable development strategies are important mechanisms for bringing together priorities in the social, economic and environmental areas and thus for pursuing an integrated approach towards development. Governments, in developing these strategies, must ensure that they contain mutually supportive measures to promote economic growth, social development and environmental protection.

[1] See agreed conclusions 1995/1 of the Council; each conference has its thematic unity and a coordinated follow-up implies that the major conferences should be viewed as interlinked and contributing to an integrated framework of and a global partnership for development.

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3. International cooperation is crucial for the implementation of conference outcomes. The international community should meet the commitments made at the major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s and at their reviews.

4. The Economic and Social Council reaffirms its commitment to promote a coordinated and integrated follow-up to and implementation of these major United Nations conferences and summits, including their five-year reviews, building on the guidance contained in its agreed conclusions 1995/1 and its subsequent resolutions on the coordinated and integrated follow-up to conferences.

5. The Council, with support of its functional commissions, will continue to promote a better coordination among the functional commissions. The Council reiterates its commitment to support the General Assembly by making recommendations to it on policies for an effective, efficient and coordinated follow-up to and implementation of the major United Nations conferences and summits.[2]

6. The Council notes the progress made by the United Nations system to support an integrated and coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, and encourages the system to further strengthen its efforts in this regard.

7. The Council is committed to ensuring that the upcoming reviews of major United Nations conferences and summits are prepared in a well coordinated and effective manner and lead to substantial progress in the implementation of the goals of the conferences, building on the lessons learned during the implementation and taking into account the outcome of earlier reviews. There is also a need to ensure that not too many processes should be held over the same time period.

8. The Council is of the view that a number of options, *inter alia*, those listed in paragraph 33 of the report of the Secretary-General,[3] could be considered for ensuring an effective and comprehensive review at the intergovernmental level of major United Nations conferences and summits. The Council invites its relevant functional commissions[4] to consider these and other possible options for enhancing the reviews of the major United Nations conferences and summits and to inform the Council for its consideration at its substantive session in 2001 of the outcome of their discussion. Particular attention should be given to the periodicity of conference reviews. In this context, the Council requests the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive report on the different options, including a compilation of the views expressed by these functional commissions.

9. In reviewing these options, the functional commissions should also consider ways and means of ensuring that they have the capacity to conduct their follow-up of conference implementation. The Council reiterates that the relevant functional commissions and other relevant intergovernmental bodies should focus on the issues

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[2] Ibid.

[3] See E/2000/57.

[4] The functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council entrusted with the follow-up to major United Nations conferences are the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission on Human Settlements. Although the Commission on Human Settlements is a standing committee, the collective term "functional commission" is used throughout the present agreed conclusions.

relating to the conference for which they are responsible, and obtain inputs from relevant bodies on related issues.[5]

10. The Council will pursue its role in addressing cross-cutting themes common to major United Nations conferences and summits. Furthermore, the Council will continue to promote an integrated and coordinated conference follow-up. In particular, it will follow up progress towards quantified goals and targets agreed at the conferences. The Council will draw the attention of the General Assembly to obstacles and constraints as well as to new challenges identified by the reviews that affect progress towards conference goals.

11. The functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies should, at an early stage, identify the possible agenda and scope of the review of the conference for which they have primary responsibility. In general, the reviews should ascertain lessons learned from the implementation of conference outcomes; constraints encountered and ways to overcome the constraints; and the impact of new developments and challenges. The outcome documents should be action-oriented and as concise as possible. To further foster the exchange of national and regional experiences in the functional commissions, donors are encouraged to provide financial resources to support participation of additional experts from developing countries.

12. Regional and national preparations are critical elements of conference reviews. The regional commissions should be increasingly involved in the reviews. They should provide timely inputs for in-depth consideration by the functional commissions and the Council. Member States are encouraged to prepare national reports on the implementation of conference outcomes, which in turn the United Nations system organizations and bodies should use more extensively in future conference reviews. The Council reiterates the importance of relevant, accurate and timely statistics and indicators for evaluating the implementation of outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits at all levels. In this context, indicators should be developed with the full participation of all countries and approved by the relevant intergovernmental bodies. The United Nations system and other donors need to work together closely to mobilize the required resources to support the building of national statistical capacity in developing countries.

13. United Nations system organizations are encouraged to further deepen their efforts to avoid duplicative requests for national reports and to share with one another information obtained through national reports thereby limiting information requested from Governments. The Council reiterates its request that the relevant secretariats prepare, in a collaborative manner, harmonized and simplified formats which could be used by Governments in preparing information on a single subject or cluster of subjects.

14. In preparing the reviews, the functional and regional commissions and organizations of the United Nations system are invited to organize technical meetings.

15. Each relevant intergovernmental body is encouraged to ensure that all other relevant bodies of the United Nations system, including the functional commissions, the regional commissions, the United Nations funds and programmes, the

[5] See agreed conclusions 1995/1 of the Council, para. 16.

specialized agencies and the international financial institutions, are engaged at an early stage of the review process in order to ensure effective and comprehensive reviews of the major United Nations conferences and summits.

16. The specialized agencies and organizations that have mandates in the area addressed by the major United Nations conferences and summits are invited to assure that their governing bodies are extensively involved in the review processes.

17. The Council notes the work conducted in the Administrative Committee on Coordination on how the United Nations system can best respond to the challenges of globalization and work towards all conference goals. It invites the Committee and its subsidiary bodies to bring to the attention of the Council, on a regular and timely basis, coordination issues and common challenges related to conference follow-up.

18. The Administrative Committee on Coordination and its subsidiary bodies should continue their work aimed at broadening the task manager approach in promoting integrated and coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, including through better use of the task managers for reporting on cross-cutting conference themes to the Council's functional commissions during their review processes.[6] The Committee is invited to inform the Council for its consideration of further developments and progress in this area.

19. The involvement and participation of relevant actors of civil society in each conference review is of particular importance. The Council requests each preparatory body to examine ways and means to improve their participation in the review process.

20. The Council encourages further progress to integrate conference outcome implementation into country assistance programmes. The Council reaffirms that the resident coordinator system has an important role to play in assisting Governments and enhancing United Nations system coordination, including through the establishment of thematic groups on cross-cutting conference themes and the full utilization of collaborative programming frameworks, particularly the common country assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, to support, at the request of Governments, the development of national strategies and action plans for integrated and coordinated conference follow-up. National reports on conference follow-up, where available, should be used in determining programmes in countries.

21. The Council underscores the importance of building national capacities for implementing conference outcomes, and reiterates that, upon the request of Governments, national capacity-building should be an explicit objective of programmes and projects supported by the United Nations system.

22. The Council encourages the building of partnerships and networks among national Governments, international organizations, civil society and private sector organizations in pursuit of conference goals.

23. The Council calls on all Governments to undertake measures, at the national and international levels, to promote the effective mobilization of resources for

[6] It may be recalled that the model of task manager used for Agenda 21 entails the delegation of coordination responsibilities to a specific United Nations organization(s) for formulating policy proposals and for reviewing progress, in areas relevant to the organization(s) mandate or specific area of expertise.

implementing major United Nations conference and summit goals. In this regard, the Council urges donor countries to strive to fulfil the internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for overall official development assistance as soon as possible.